examined on their individual merits subject to the exigencies of service.

In the 1980s, two cadre reviews were undertaken to increase promotion avenues for officers within a pyramidical structure of the Forces. With the acceptance of the recommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission a concept of running pay scales for the posts of Second Lieutenant of the Army and equivalent upto and including the rank of Brigadier and equivalent has also been introduced. These measures have substantially improved the career prospects and emolument packages of the Armed Forces officers.

Statement

Premature Retirement of Service Officers —No. of Cases Approved
Army Officers (except Armed Forces Medical Services)

Year	Lt. Gen	Maj. Gen.	Brig	Con Lt Cols		Major	Capt	Lts.	Total
1991	2*	2	21	87	181	89	23	-	405
1992	-	3@	26	124	287	130	31	1	602
1993	-	1	33	106	284	129	39	1	593

* including 1 who had applied in 1990

@ including 1 who had applied in 1991

NAVY

	VAdm/RAdm	Commodore/ Cdt	Cdr	Lt Cdr & below	Total
1991	1	20	63	25	109
1992	1	28	71	61	161
1993	2	23	107	41	173

AIR FORCE:

	Air Commodore & above	GP Capts & below	Total
1991	7	155	162
1992	3	157	160
1993	10	177	187

Deferring the third test flight of Agni

515. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the third test flight of IRBM—"Agni" was indefinitely deferred on the 7th January, 1994, following a technical snag in one of the on-board systems at the last minute of the scheduled launch;

(b) if so, the details of the snag; and

(c) the steps taken to eliminate such snags in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Third test flight of technology demonstrator AGNI re- entry test vehicle was deferred for a later date due to technical snag.

(b) During the Count-Down phase before the launch, the computer indicated a technical snag in the Booster Thrust Vector Control System.

(c) Computerised count down is introduced to eliminate the possibility of mislaunch. Cause

of snag has been identified and adequate steps have been taken to eliminate recurrence of similar snags. AGNI system has since been successfully launched on 19 Feb. 1994.

Strengthening of Coast Guard to prevent smuggling

516. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of the commander of East Coast Guard Region published in the Hindu daily dated the 5th February, 1994 about the difficulty to stop smuggling of fuel from India; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to strengthen the coast guard and prevent smuggling of diesel from India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Coast Guard have established coast guard/air station support units operating in the Palk Bay area. Round the clock surveillance and close vigilance on the east coast area has been enhanced by providing additional offshore/ Inshore Patrol Vessels and Interceptors crafts. In additional, all suspicious boats carrying diesel in excess to their requirements are intercepted and inspected.

Indo-German agreement for MBT, Arjun

517. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Germany have signed a contract for the supply and transfer of technology for the engine and transmission systems of the main battle tank Arjun;

(b) what are the features of the agreement; and

(c) whether the German Companies will supply a limited number of engines and transmission systems;

(d) whether they have agreed to supply technology for their domestic manufactures also;

(e) to what extent it will be beneficial for the Arjun Tank; and

(f) by when the agreement is likely to be fully implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f). Do not arise.

Firing on Indo-Pak border

518. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:
SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been incidents of intermittent firing from across the border on Indian army positions in Jammu and Kashmir, including in the Poonch sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of casualties of civilian and army men and loss of property during 1993; and

(c) what steps Government have taken so far or propose to take to stop such firings from Pakistani side and whether any protest notes have been sent to Pakistan Government to desist from such activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCFE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) (a) Firing by Pakistani troops along the Line of Control/border in Jammu and Kashmir is a regular feature.

(b) There were a total of 1918 firing incidents during 1993. There were a few casualties in the Army and the BSF. Eleven civilians were wounded in the firings.

(c) Since cases of firing were of a minor nature, such instances were tackled at the local level.

Killing of soldiers of Defence services corps by militants at Awantipur

519. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nine soldiers of the Defence Services Corps at Radio Beacon System at Zadoora of the military air base, Awantipur, south Kashmir, were killed on